

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Birds at the New Causeway Construction.—Early in November (1952), the suction dredge was working the river at the eastern end of the new Swan River Causeway, and discharging its silt on the north side close to the Great Eastern Highway side of the circus. A flock of about 300 Silver Gulls (*Larus novae-hollandiae*) was patiently waiting for the food items that came to light when the discharged silt settled. Behind them and in a distinct flock were about 100 White-headed Stilts (*Himantopus himantopus*).

—W. BAGGS, Victoria Park.

Use of the Upper Nest of the Yellow-tailed Thornbill.—In the only references I have, Cayley and Serventy and Whittell, it is stated that there is no direct evidence of the use of the upper construction of the nest of the Yellow-tailed Thornbill (chigaree, coastal chickaree, local chipparee, *Acanthiza ehryssorrhoea*).

Don Dowsett, aged 13, a reliable observer, noticed a pair with their second clutch of three eggs. The male was settled right down in the top compartment. On being disturbed he flew out uttering a continuous warning of "cheps." The female emerged at once and flew off, but in silence. Later when the eggs were hatched, Don Dowsett, late at night with a torch made sure the bird was occupying the top compartment. This time he made no attempt to escape or to warn and the light was switched off at once.

The top nest is deep, some 3 in., with a trough leading off in the opposite direction to the lower opening. If finished like the lower nest it would form a tunnel exit.

—HERBERT BERRY, Government School, Wandering.

Field Diaries of F. Lawson Whitlock.—Members of the Naturalists' Club will be interested to learn that the notebooks maintained by our veteran ornithologist and honorary member, Mr. F. Lawson Whitlock, were handed over by him to me, and I have now deposited them in the Archives Department of the Public Library, Perth. Here they will be available for reference by interested students. The notebooks represented are as follows: Expedition to Lake Way (July 1 to August 31, September 1 to December 6, 1909). Notes in connection with the Lake Way trip (July to December, 1909), Shark Bay (June 8 to October 19, 1920). Nullarbor Plain (June 24 to November 7, 1921). Fortescue River (July 16 to November 21, 1922). Central Australia (March 16 to November 7, 1923). Kimberley, Fitzroy River (May 14, 1924 to April 20, 1925). Bunbury diary (January 1, 1948 to December 31, 1950). Among the documents there is also a copy of Robert Hall's *Key to the Birds of Australia and Tasmania*, 1899, with copious manuscript notes inserted by Mr. Whitlock.

—H. M. WHITTELL, Bridgetown.

Size of the Rock Python.—In L. Glauert's *Handbook of the Snakes of Western Australia*, 1950, it is stated that the rock or water python (*Liasis olivaceus*) attains a length of about 6 feet.